Welcome to Story Station U on 89-3 WGSU, Geneseo's Voice of the Valley, your local radio broadcast where campus life meets American headlines! I'm your host, Madilyn Becker, and I'll be breaking down the recent news that could change your weekend plans- or maybe your future! Don't forget: you can follow along with tonight's script and read all of my sources online at the WGSU website!

Thank you all for joining me for another semester of Story Station U! Do you have any thoughts on the show, questions you've been wanting to ask me, or any news story you want me to cover? Good news! You can now email me about all things Story Station U! Email me at storystationu@gmail.com to get in touch! Again, that's ''story station, with a lowercase letter u'' at gmail.com. I would love to hear from you!

To kick off our show tonight, I'll be examining impacts of President Trump's deportation orders. During the first week of his presidency, Mr. Trump issued several executive orders regarding immigration and deportations of illegal immigrants in the U.S. The most notable of which expanded our nation's infrastructure to detain immigrants being deported and gave permission to the Department of Homeland Security and Immigration and Customs Enforcement, more commonly known as ICE, to make arrests inside of previously safe locations, such as places of worship and schools. Some groups have pursued legal action against this ruling, claiming that it infringed on the freedom of religion in America, however courts have not yet come to a decision. Reverend Emma Lozano of Chicago's Lincoln United Methodist Church moved her services online earlier this month. She told CNN, the last time this change was made, the nation was facing a global pandemic. She said: "Then, what we were waiting for was the vaccine". Reverend Lozano continued, saying "Now, we're all wondering, what is the medicine? What is the vaccine for this? How long is it going to take?". However, she promised that while this decision was painful, it was made in the interest of protecting people. According to CNN, there have not yet been any ICE raids inside churches, however, a recent arrest outside a church in Atlanta, Georgia fueled fears of places of worship losing their status of being a safe place. Reverend Mark Knutson holds worship at Augustana Lutheran Church in Portland, Oregan and is also speaking out against President Trump's order. However, his protests have been full of messages welcoming people into his church. While speaking to CNN, Reverend Knutson said "If people of faith don't take a stand now, who is?". He has publicly declared his church as a sanctuary for those afraid of being affected by ICE raids. He explained, "If there were a mass action in Portland, we'd have hundreds of people coming to the church knowing it's a safe place. And we would not allow ICE" to enter. The reverend further explained that not only would he prevent ICE agents from entering his church, but he would call "every local news station around and surround ICE with people and the news". He said he is ready to make that stand, and record and protest if things "get ugly". At the same church where Reverend Knutson holds his services, another man, Francisco Aguirre, declared: "I'm undocumented and unafraid, but I will continue organizing in peace, even if tomorrow they deport me, and I pay with my life". He spoke at the church's Martin Luther King Jr. Day service, and occasionally holds Spanish services at the church. Decades ago, he came to the U.S. from El Savador, and is still awaiting a decision on his immigration case. He is the executive director

of an immigrant advocacy organization, and previously took refuge in the very church he now worships and holds services.

Our next headline comes from York, Pennsylvania. On the morning of February 22nd, a gunman entered the intensive care unit of a busy hospital, taking several hospital staff members hostage before ultimately being fatally shot by police. The gunman has been identified as forty-nine year old male, Diogenes Archangel Ortiz. Before being taken out by police, he wounded five and killed one police officer by the name of Andrew Duarte. In 2021, Duarte received the Mothers Against Drunk Driving Hero Award for his work in ‘’impaired driving enforcement”. Two other officers were reported to have suffered gun wounds, but are in stable condition, according to York County DA Tim Barker. No patients were injured in the incident. The motive for the shooting has not yet been revealed, but information was released stating that the gunman specifically targeted the intensive care unit, whichhe had contacted the previous week about a medical case involving a separate individual. The Gun Violence Archive defines a mass shooting as an event resulting in “a minimum of four victims shot, either injured or killed, not including any shooter”. As of February 24th, 2025, the archive lists thirty-seven mass shootings in the United States in 2025. According to the National Fraternal Order of Police, in January 2025, thirty-one officers were shot and killed in the line of duty.

Let’s turn to our next story tonight: President Trump’s approval ratings have dropped. A popular phrase in politics, the honeymoon period, describes the period of popularity most new high-ranking officials and presidents enjoy upon taking office. For presidents, this period is usually seen as a few months of high approval ratings, and is the best time to pass legislation, as Congress is more likely to respect the new president’s power. Former President Barack Obama saw an approval rating over sixty percent during his honeymoon period. Now, sources, such as Gallup and Reuters, suggest President Trump’s honeymoon period is over, raising questions about whether he experienced one at all. USA Today reported that President Trump’s approval ratings were higher in the beginning of his second term compared to his first term in 2017. In January 2025, President Trump's approval rating was just over fifty percent, while almost sixty percent of Americans believed he was doing a better job than former president Joe Biden. When he took office, forty-two percent of Americans approved of President Trump’s handling of the economy. Around the middle of February, that number decreased to a thirty-nine percent approval rating. President Trump’s margin of approval versus disapproval rating percentages was the second-lowest among newly elected presidents since World War II. In the 2024 presidential election, Donald Trump secured the presidency. However, neither candidate in this election received more than fifty percent of the popular vote. This small margin of support from voters automatically put him at a disadvantage for a lengthy honeymoon period, as approval ratings are decided upon by American voters. This month, President Trump’s approval rating has dropped thirteen points, suggesting that his honeymoon period, if he ever saw one, has ended with an approval rating below fifty percent.

Despite President Trump’s criticism from the American people, our next story comes from one of his most loyal supporters. On January 6th, 2021, hundreds of Donald Trump supporters stormed the nation’s capitol building in Washington, D.C., in protest of former

president Joe Biden being declared the winner of the 2020 presidential election. Rachel Powell was among this crowd. She, like with many others, was convicted of breaking the law, and sentenced to federal jail time. Recently, President Trump issued presidential pardons for all convicted members of the January 6th insurrection. To explain them briefly, presidential pardons are a power given to the president by the U.S. constitution. This power allows the president to grant justice to citizens who have been convicted of, or are being investigated for, a federal crime. Pardons often release citizens from jail. This was Rachel Powell's case; she was among approximately two-hundred and fifty citizens released from jail who had been serving time for violent crimes committed during the January 6th insurrection. With her freedom, Powell applied for a gun-permit. However, when the application asked if she had ever been ''convicted of a crime punishable by imprisonment", she hesitated. Answering yes would invalidate her application to legally own a gun, however, she feared that checking no would be seen as a false answer, and result in her being charged, again, for breaking the law. She was advised to consult a lawyer, as this was an unprecedented case, but she soon marked no on her application. Her tattoo, done while she was incarcerated, reading ''J6", a reference to the date of the riot, was on display as she left the courthouse and turned in her application. While a survey conducted by the Pew Research Center revealed that most Americans disapproved of President Trump's pardons to the rioters, Powell is grateful to the president. While being interviewed by the New York Times, she proudly displayed her President Trump ball cap, signed by the president himself, with the message, "Rachel, we love you". Earlier this month, the president defended his action to pardon all January 6th rioters by telling reporters that those citizens were ''assaulted by our government". Powell now receives financial assistance from the Patriot Freedom Organization, a ''J6 support organization". Powell moved back home to western Pennsylvania, a predominantly Republican area. She has close relationships with other women who participated in the riot, whom she calls her "J6 sisters". However, media outlets and prosecutors are still speaking out against the rioters. According to federal prosecutors, Powell was an ''aggressor''. She notoriously used an ''ice ax and makeshift battering ram to break a Capitol window as overwhelmed officers tried to hold back the mob", according to the New York Times. NPR has criticized the president for his pardons, as several of the citizens pardoned for their charges stemming from their role in the riot have previous criminal backgrounds. According to NPR, these include: rape, sexual abuse of a minor, domestic violence, drug trafficking, and more. I'd love to hear your thoughts on this story, or any of the ones mentioned in tonight's show! Send me an email at storystationu@gmail.com to get in touch!

Before I end tonight's show, I'd like to raise awareness that this week, from February 24th to March 2nd, is National Eating Disorder Awareness Week. According to the National Eating Disorders Association, this week is "an annual campaign to educate the public about the realities of eating disorders and to provide hope and visibility to individuals and loved ones impacted by eating disorders". Eating disorders have the second-highest mortality rate among mental health conditions. Over twenty-eight million Americans will suffer from an eating disorder in their lifetime. The first National Eating Disorder Awareness week took place in 1987, with the movement expanding internationally by 2000. If you are a SUNY Geneseo student struggling with an eating disorder, Lauderdale Health Center on campus offers all students free and confidential, physical and mental, health resources. SUNY Geneseo will also be hosting a

mental health town hall on March 5th, from 4:00 to 5:30pm in Milne 134; this event will be open to all students, faculty, and staff. Eatingdisorderhope.com is an online community providing access to resources, education, and support for anyone struggling with an eating disorder.

I'd also like to discuss some events happening on campus! Today was The Diversity Summit which included several different activities and presentations to promote diversity, inclusivity, and education among SUNY Geneseo students, faculty, and community members! Presenters ranged from students, to Geneseo alumni, to professional public speakers to demonstrate the value of diversity education and commitment to fostering a welcoming environment on our campus and in our community! If you attended the diversity summit, I'd love to hear about your experience! Email me and let me know! Also, this Saturday, the Geneseo Ice Knights will play in the United Collegiate Hockey Conference semifinal game! The game will be held in the IRA ice arena and will start at 7pm! More information about the game and tickets can be found on geneseoknights.com!

As always, let's end the night with a moment of good news! This week's good news comes from the Amazon Rainforest. Researcher and conservationist, Fernanda Abra, has been working with groups of indigenous peoples from the Amazon to make a safer environment for monkey species living there. Some highways have been built intersecting with the Amazon, making way for motor vehicles to drive through the natural environment. This has divided the homes of many species, including the groves' titi monkeys. Crossing these highways is extremely dangerous for the monkeys, and they are already a highly endangered animal. So, Abra has begun building tree-top canopies that act as bridges, far above the dangerous roads, for the monkeys. This allows them to roam their natural habitat freely, and safely. Her project has used knowledge from indigenous peoples' knowledge of where the animals usually live and explore to understand where to build these bridges. She received a grant to build thirty tree-top crossings. Each one will be equipped with a camera, which will help Abra further conservation efforts and understand exactly how many groves' titi monkeys we have left.

That's our top headlines for tonight, but the world never stops spinning and news never stops breaking, so join me again next Tuesday, same place, same time for all of your top headlines! Don't forget you can read my script and see all of tonight's sources on WGSU's website! And don't forget, you can email me about all things Story Station U at storystationu@gmail.com! Thank you again for joining me tonight. I'm your host, Madilyn Becker, and I'll talk to you next week on 89-3 WGSU, Geneseo's Voice of the Valley!